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AUTHOR	Pugach, Marleen C.
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ABSTRACT

The U.S.-Mexican border is an extensive geographical region that is socially and economically distinct from either the United States or Mexico. It has always been a multilingual and multicultural place. This book examines the social and cultural complexities of life in one small rural border town and its high school. Chapter 1 describes Havens, New Mexico, and its interdependence with its Mexican neighbors. Chapter 2 introduces three "cultural mediators," two students and one teacher from Havens High School. These individuals are highly conscious of their border-bound lives and work actively to mediate between their local and Mexican cultures. Chapter 3 presents the language landscape in the community and in the schools, focusing on the uses of Spanish and English. This is followed by a specific description of the district's bilingual education programs in chapter 4. Chapter 5 introduces the social structure of the high school and describes student interactions across cultural lines. Chapter 6 presents an alternative metaphor for thinking about the border, and identifies markers of opportunity that already exist in Havens as it works toward defining what it means to be a bicultural and binational community. The epilogue reviews progress in bicultural relations, the effect of new U.S. immigration laws, and how hospitality has been the foundation of Havens' cross-border relationships. Contains 35 references, notes, and an index. (Author/TD)

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